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ABSTRACT

Several categories of problems affecting adult learning services in Colorado require state-level policy intervention for their solution. They include problems that limit adults' access to existing learning services, inadequacies in existing services, deficiencies in statewide planning and coordination of learning services, and financial inequities. Policy options that could be pursued to resolve issues and problems involve clarification of state responsibility, incentives for action, programmatic thrusts, leadership and state agency reorganization, and finance. Surveys of Colorado lay leaders and educators regarding their preferences for policy priorities show that they favor (1) policy provisions that cause state government and educational institutions to share responsibility for adult learning services with local and private groups; (2) funding approaches that provide incentives for schools and colleges to offer educational programs, for business and industry to encourage employee education, and for students to take advantage of educational opportunities; and (3) special attention for certain groups. Policymakers must choose either to develop a long-range plan addressing many policy aims or limit attention to important or feasible aims. The need for policy discussions is evident within and between educational institutions, local communities, and business-industry groups. (YLB)

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Summary Report:
Policy Options Affecting
Adult Learning Services In Colorado

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Prepared by:

THE COLORADO LIFELONG LEARNING PROJECT

FOR THE

COLORADO COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

November, 1983

The Summary Report is a condensed version of a longer report of the same title. Both reports were prepared by Sheila Knop, Director, Colorado Lifelong Learning Project.

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Colorado Commission on Higher Education:

Michael R. Moore, Chairman
Charles Manning, Interim Executive Director
Timothy M. Grieder, Director, Continuing Education and Extended Academic Programs

The Division of Continuing Education, University of Colorado-Boulder, serves as fiscal agent for the Colorado Lifelong Learning Project. The Colorado Project was earlier affiliated with the Lifelong Learning Project which was administered by the Education Commission of the States and funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

The Colorado Project recognizes and appreciates the efforts of these, and the many other Colorado education agencies, organizations and individuals who have lent support to various aspects of this Project.

INTRODUCTION

In a time when educational issues are being raised for public discussion, the report "Policy Options Affecting Adult Learning Services in Colorado" is intended as a springboard for policy action. The report is written for use by policy makers, educators and concerned lay citizens as they seek to resolve difficult challenges facing Colorado education and larger society. The report:

(1) summarizes issues and problems affecting adult learning services in Colorado;

(2) presents policy options that could be pursued to resolve issues and problems;

(3) describes policy preferences of several hundred educators and lay civic organizations leaders in the state; and

(4) discusses implications for state agencies, educational institutions, governing bodies, and other groups.

No single option or approach is advocated in the report; these decisions are the responsibility of policy makers, education officials and practioners, and Colorado citizens. Nor are all possible options described. Rather, several clusters of policy provisions are presented which might be adopted or adapted singly, in combination, or in tandem. It is hoped that these several examples will stimulate the imaginations of others who will generate additional options and creative, cost-effective ways to implement adult learning policy.

Methods and Sources of Data

The report is a synthesis of several studies which were conducted by the Colorado Lifelong Learning Project between June, 1980, and July, 1983. The investigations have included:

(1) reviews of studies of adult learning services, and of public policy in Colorado and other states;

(2) interviews with Colorado education officials to identify issues and problems of state-wide significance;

(3) random-sample surveys of public and private sector educators and lay leaders to identify problems and preferred policy actions;

(4) analysis of demographic, socio-economic and employment trends; and

(5) state and regional conferences of educators and lay leaders to explore implications of survey findings and trend information.

The report draws from several earlier publications of the Lifelong Learning Project. Abstracts of previous project papers and ordering information are provided on the final pages of the report.

Sponsorship

The Lifelong Learning Project is sponsored by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE). The project was earlier affiliated with an Education Commission of the States' effort, which was funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The director of CCHE Continuing Education and Extended Academic Programs provides administrative leadership for the project. The Division of Continuing Education, University of Colorado at Boulder, serves as fiscal agent.

The report does not necessarily reflect the views of the CCHE. It is submitted for consideration and action by the Commission and other state agencies and policy making bodies in Colorado. Dependent on action by policy makers, citizens and educators, the various policy provisions would affect several Colorado education institutions and agencies. Most notably affects would be felt in public schools, vocational and community colleges, four-year colleges and universities, the State Department of Education, the State Board of Community Colleges and Occupational Education, and the Commission on Higher Education.

PROBLEMS WHICH REQUIRE STATE-LEVEL INTERVENTION

There are several categories of problems which, to be resolved, require state-level policy intervention. They include: (1) problems which limit adults' access to existing learning services; (2) inadequacies in existing services; (3) deficiencies in state-wide planning and coordination of learning services; and (4) financial inequities.

Problems of Access

There are factors that limit adults' access to the resources and services of Colorado education institutions. Geographic considerations, size of community, work and family responsibilities, personal factors such as previous educational attainment or family income, and awareness of the availability of learning resources affect their ability to take advantage of learning services.

Adults in small towns or in areas which are distant from educational institutions have access to fewer and less varied resources than do people who live in larger towns or near campuses. Work and family obligations intervene, making it difficult for adults to take advantage of learning services that are offered during work hours, over extended periods of time, or in distant places.

Access to most privately-sponsored learning services requires affiliation with the sponsoring organization, through membership or employment. Access to resources of public organizations is often restricted by personal eligibility factors. Post-secondary continuing education programs for academic or vocational credit are restricted to persons with adequate past schooling, appropriate course prerequisites, and in many cases, the ability to pay full costs of their instruction. Access to JOBS training programs is restricted to persons who meet limited income and under- or unemployment criteria. Staff development programs of public agencies are restricted to employees of those agencies.

According to a Colorado study, almost half of the state's adults were unaware of places they could go to "receive training or take some kind of educational

learning program."[1] Over one-half of older, low-income, and Spanish-American adults, especially those with less than 12 years of formal schooling, did not know how to find learning services. No client-oriented state-wide directory of adult learning services exists, and few communities have attempted comprehensive cataloging and publicizing of local resources.

Inadequacies in Services

Some learning needs and some groups of learners have been overlooked. Educational challenges which reflect inadequacies and gaps in service are summarized under three headings: (1) post-industrial impacts; (2) functional literacy; and (3) local problem-solving capabilities.

Post-industrial impacts. The "high tech" emphasis in Colorado and the nation suggests that many jobs will become obsolete. New academic and occupational skills are needed. The shift from an industrial to post-industrial economy promises other educational challenges more complex than occupational updating and retraining.

Displaced workers will need educational experiences to enhance self-confidence, promote self-sufficiency and preserve family relationships. The shift will require changes in attitudes, values and life-style. Some people will need to find security and worth outside the traditional work-for-pay environment. Others will need to learn to share scarce jobs. All will need to learn ways to preserve democratic processes in a time when relatively few people could control and manipulate information to suit their purposes. These challenges suggest the need for collaborative efforts among educational institutions, business-industry, governmental agencies, community groups, the media, and local, state, and federal policy makers.

Functional literacy. Literacy is required for effective performance of most adult responsibilities. Illiteracy is often associated with high incidences of unemployment, marginal living conditions, and economic dependency. Some functionally illiterate adults had little formal schooling during their youth. Others possess school diplomas.

Few services are available to meet these basic learning needs. Only nine of Colorado's 181 school districts sponsor adult high school completion programs. State formula funds for elementary and secondary schools are restricted to services for students under the age of 21. Federal block grant funds for adult basic education are waning.

Involving and holding students in basic or remedial programs is a difficult task. People in need of basic or remedial services find it hard to admit their need. Special approaches which are sensitive to people's past experiences and self-esteem are required.

The post-industrial era and commonplace use of computers will demand expanded definitions of functional literacy. Communication, computation and problem-solving abilities will need to be complemented by computer proficiency and knowledge of how to use and manage technological tools and technological impacts.

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[1] B.M. Barlow and C.R. Timiraos, Colorado Adult Needs Assessment: Final Technical Report, Denver: Colorado Department of Education and State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education, October, 1975, p. 39.

Local problem-solving capabilities. Concern about declines in student performance, the quality of education, and the capacity of educational institutions to promote excellence is a timely example of a complex problem which demands local attention. Most solutions have placed responsibility for educational improvements with schools, colleges and teachers, while only alluding to the role of parents and the larger community.

Demographic trends, including the tendency toward smaller families and couples without children, are being felt in Colorado communities. In many towns a relatively small percentage of adult residents have children in school or college. To function well, educational institutions need the support both of parents and of other community members. Schools and colleges which do not enjoy this support suffer because they have made inadequate efforts to (1) meaningfully involve adults in activities in behalf of youth, (2) share learning resources with adults as well as with youth, and (3) inform and solicit advice of the community in decisions affecting public education. Concerted, largely non-formal learning experiences are needed which help educators and lay citizens to work together to overcome these shortcomings.

Communities have need to resolve educational issues and to solve other local problems as well. Civic leaders and lay citizens need to learn together in order to deal with such problems as rapid population growth or decline, unemployment, crime, and land-use planning. A variety of educational disciplines are producing knowledge that could be applied to help communities solve their problems. But typically, educational institutions have depended on a delivery system that provides learning services for individual, mostly on-campus students. There have not been provisions for educational service to groups of people who represent a local community, have concerns in common, and who must act together to solve community problems.

Deficiencies in State-Wide-Planning and Coordination

Citizens must be aware of learning opportunities before they can take advantage of them. Educators need information about programs in a variety of organizations in order to counsel and refer adult clients. They need to be aware of model programs and cost-effective ways to provide learning services if they are to improve their own programs. Communities have need for technical assistance to aid them to plan and promote local learning services. Public education expenditures should be monitored for quality and equity of service. These are but several concerns which demand state-wide planning and coordination.

By their nature, adult learning services could be the prerogative of all three of the state's education agencies--i.e., the Department of Education, the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education, and the Commission on Higher Education. Other pressing demands, confusion about each agency's responsibility for adult learning services, and competition for limited funds have prevented any from asserting leadership to promote inter-agency and state-wide cooperation, collaboration and planning to meet adult learning needs.

Financial Inequities

Coloradans have traditionally placed high value on learning, as indicated by budget allocations for education. However, this concern has not been extended to the adult population.

A Colorado statute limits state formula funds for elementary and secondary education to students under the age of 21. Credit and non-credit continuing education programs of four-year colleges and universities are financed solely by user fees, while academic credit continuing education programs of community colleges receive state formula funding. Recent General Assembly action authorized the "extended campus program" which would allow four-year colleges and universities to use state formula funds to offer off-campus courses for academic credit. To date, funds have not been appropriated for this purpose. Grants and loans are infrequently available to part-time adult students. Educational institutions seldom provide release time or other incentives for faculty members so that they might assist communities to resolve educational issues and other local problems.

These financial inequities reflect several underlying and unresolved questions. The most basic and unresolved question is: What ought to be the nature and extent of state responsibility in the provision of adult learning services--and how does it compare with the responsibility of other groups such as local communities, business-industry, and individuals and families themselves?

POLICIES TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

The report is concerned with state-level policy, which in Colorado is developed by legislative and executive branches of state government and a host of institutional governing boards. The policies are aimed at solving one, or simultaneously several, of the problems noted above. While too numerous to treat fully in this summary, the policies include those that involve: (1) clarification of state responsibility; (2) incentives for action; (3) programmatic thrusts; (4) leadership and state agency reorganization; and (4) finance.

Clarification of State Responsibility

Because the nature and extent of state responsibility for adult learning services is not clear, because of the diversity of sponsors of learning programs, and because of the need for cooperation and collaboration among them, goal and priority setting for policy purposes is especially needed. Without a backdrop of general intentions and more specific and timely priorities, policies and programs are piecemeal and effective action is often frustrated. Without understandings of shared goals, organizations have no basis for complementary or cooperative ventures.

To represent public policy, goals and priorities must be generally agreed upon. Citizens have a vested interest, as do policy makers, private organizations (e.g., industries which require skilled workers), and the educational institutions that will be expected to carry out policies.

A variety of approaches can be used to solicit comment and gain agreement on goals and priorities. Several examples include: random-sample mailed surveys; phone interviews; personal interviews; group meetings and conferences; public hearings; public referenda. Mailed surveys, interviews and conferences have been used by the Lifelong Learning Project to determine the extent to which there is agreement on problems, goals, and priorities in Colorado. Results of these studies are summarized later in this paper.

Still other approaches can be used to incorporate goal and priority statements in public records. They can be endorsed by the Governor, the General Assembly,

local Councils of Government, the Parent-Teacher-Student Association, local school districts, business-industry councils, and a variety of professional associations. They can be incorporated in role and mission statements of educational institutions and in state education master planning documents. They can be stated in prefaces to bills requiring state financing.

The process of establishing and publicizing goals takes time. Setting priorities is an on-going process, reflective of changing needs and circumstances. While a backdrop of shared intents is desirable, other efforts need not await these agreements. More tangible policy and program activity should be pursued in the meantime.

Incentives for Action

Education, as central to democracy, is assumed to be a long-term, largely voluntary approach to solving individual and collective problems and to promoting individual and collective well-being. It follows that long-term, largely voluntary strategies should be used to make educational improvements. Incentives, therefore, must play a major role in encouraging students to learn, teachers to teach, and educational institutions, local communities, business-industry, media, and others to sponsor needed educational services. Considering problems noted earlier, incentives are needed which promote (1) creativity, excellence and equity, (2) accountability and cost-effectiveness, and (3) communication and cooperation. Incentives include those that are mostly economic (e.g., financial assistance or reward; expectation of a job) and those that are mostly social in nature (e.g., increased recognition, esteem, status).

State policy provisions could provide both economic and social incentives. Small grants (with requirements for matching funds) could be made available to local communities that desire to improve educational services or to use educational strategies to solve local problems. Similarly, small grants could provide incentives for joint ventures between schools, colleges and business-industry. Faculty salary, promotion and tenure systems could be altered to remove current disincentives for service to adults and communities that are in need of faculty expertise. Role and mission statements of educational institutions could incorporate concern for service to adults. The age restriction in the Colorado statute for public schools could be removed. Grants, loans and state tax credits could be made available for older and part-time students. Tax incentives could encourage industries to sponsor employee education programs, especially if those programs were in collaboration with educational institutions. Tax incentives could encourage lay citizens to serve as volunteer teachers in basic or continuing education programs. Public recognition, publicity, and awards could be offered to individuals and groups that are involved in particularly creative efforts, especially those which merit emulation.

Programmatic Thrusts

Many people believe that state intervention is only appropriate when the public's welfare is at stake and when non-state entities are unable or unwilling to take needed or effective action. Many also believe that intervention should be done in a way that does not commit public resources for specific activities "in perpetuity," but rather encourages and enables other groups to take as much initiative as possible, as quickly as possible. In this spirit, three broad thrusts which would require state policy affirmation are offered. The thrusts are: (1) technical

and planning assistance; (2) promotion and publicity; and (3) targeted and experimental programs.

Technical and planning assistance. A service could be established to aid schools, colleges, business-industry, communities and other groups to effectively plan and offer adult learning services. Technical assistance could be provided to increase capabilities for demographic and socio-economic trend analyses, needs and interest studies, use and interpretation of trend and needs data, resource identification, program planning and evaluation.

Technical assistance professionals could be housed together in one state agency, or expertise could be drawn as needed from several agencies and from schools and colleges. Assistance could be delivered through staff development seminars of individual organizations, by teleconferences, mail and telephone consultations, and/or through the convening authority of state government. Because several groups could participate together in state-convened technical assistance workshops, that approach has the added advantage of fostering inter-institutional and public-private-sector collaboration.

Promotion and publicity. Literacy campaigns could be mounted. Directories of learning resources could be compiled and publicized. Publicity could be given to model programs and creative talent. Lay-language reports that tell practical results of college and university research could be broadly distributed.

Costs of promotion and publicity could be minimized through cooperation with broadcast media, the press, and microcomputer-accessible information systems. Publicity could also be provided through the established communication networks and bulletins produced by schools and colleges, cooperative extension, employers, churches, city government, and public utilities.

Targeted and experimental programs. The state could encourage relatively short-term applied research and demonstration activities to (1) attack problems and meet needs on a small scale, and then to (2) transfer/adapt promising efforts to broader contexts. Cost-sharing and other evidence of institutional commitment to programs which are initiated through use of state "seed money" could be required. Several diverse examples of potential experiments are those which would (1) recruit, orient and "hold" volunteer teachers; (2) promote low-cost, appropriate use of technology to reach learners distant from college campuses; (3) initiate community study circles; (4) provide improved capabilities for career planning and educational guidance; and (5) promote cooperative extension-postsecondary-business/industry collaboration to meet rural education needs.

Because some equity of opportunity concerns have not yet been resolved, special programs could be targeted at particular audiences (e.g., low-income people, elderly, women, racial/ethnic minorities, handicapped people). Other experimental programs could be targeted at geographic regions of the state with special problems (e.g., places impacted by rapid population growth or decline; rural places distant from campuses; areas with a high proportion of displaced workers).

Leadership and State Agency Reorganization

Leadership is required if problems are to be solved. As they exist today, Colorado state education agency structures and agency priorities do not legitimize concern for or promote leadership in adult learning services.

Options for state agency reorganization are discussed in the context of the functions of state-level planning and coordination (as contrasted with institutional and local/regional planning and coordination functions). Several different organizational structures are presented in the full report, ranging from minor modifications of existing structures to major restructuring of Colorado's education sectors. One would give resources and heightened visibility to adult learning services within the context of existing structures. Another would assign functions and resources to an inter-agency adult learning services council. Another would separate adult learning services of all state agencies from those agencies and cluster them together in a new "institute." Still another would merge state education agencies and create a "division" for adult learning services within the one new organization.

Potential consequences of organizational changes are discussed. Expected disruptions, losses in worker productivity, and the question of how large an organization can become without losing capability for effective service are factors which must be considered before changes are made.

Finance

Some policy provisions that have been discussed would require special funding; others would not. Traditionally, Colorado and other states have used a combination of (1) direct and indirect institutional support and (2) student financial aid as mechanisms to fund educational efforts. Age restrictions and the inability to participate as full-time students often prevent adults from taking advantage of these financial resources. A taxonomy of traditional financing mechanisms and how they could be revised to accommodate adults is included.

Other mechanisms, specifically tailored to adult learning services, are noted. Some examples include: an education "insurance plan" that is activated in times of economic emergency; state tax credits for non-occupational education and for people who file income tax short-forms; selective entitlements for specific types of learning or particular categories of students; formula or direct grant funding for off-campus continuing education programs; establishment of a foundation (comprised of public and matching private funds) to make grants and loans available to students.

Several policies that would promote public- private-sector resource sharing have already been mentioned. Other policies could encourage: school-college-business cooperation (e.g., employee exchanges, "work and learning councils," sharing of facilities and equipment); faculty technical assistance to communities, at cost of travel; joint educational programs by schools, colleges, public and commercial broadcast, and newspapers.

POLICY PRIORITIES: PREFERENCES OF COLORADO LAY LEADERS AND EDUCATORS

Two mailed surveys were conducted by the Lifelong Learning Project to solicit advice about problems, policy guidelines, and priorities for educational service. Lay leaders and educators were carefully selected to assure that their judgments portray informed opinion about educational and other civic problems in Colorado. Sampling procedures insured that advice from lay citizens and educators was balanced to reflect concerns of men and women associated with (1) public and private schools, colleges, and non-formal education organizations, (2) business and industry,

(3) local lay citizen leadership, (4) ethnic and racial minorities, and (5) rural and urban communities, state-wide. In addition to mailed surveys, the Project conducted interviews with education officials and held a state-wide conference to solicit advice. In total, three hundred Coloradans participated in the two successive rounds of surveys, interviews, and the conference.

Because the people involved in Project activities are in positions to affect public opinion in matters concerning education, their insights and preferences are of particular interest. Their input shaped the "Problems" and "Policies" chapters of the report. Their other judgments regarding policy guidelines and priorities for services are summarized here. Considerably more detail is provided in the full report and in earlier Project publications.

Lay civic organization leaders and educators favor policy provisions which would cause state government and educational institutions to share responsibility for adult learning services with localities, private-sector interests, and individuals who might benefit from those services. In that spirit, they believe that the state should both directly offer (through its schools and colleges) some educational opportunities, and should indirectly encourage local communities and private groups to sponsor some services. They favor funding approaches which would provide incentives for schools and colleges to offer educational programs, for business-industry to encourage employee education, and for individual students to take advantage of educational opportunities.

In recognition of the special needs of some audiences, lay leaders and educators believe that some groups should receive special attention. They are especially concerned that educational needs of socially-economically disadvantaged, undereducated, and rural adults be met. While they believe that a number of learning topics are important, they place emphasis on basic academic and occupational preparation, and on continuing education for occupational updating.

Finally, lay leaders and educators believe that the education of adults is a concern both important enough and generalized enough to merit state policy intervention. They view the education of adults as a basic and long-term strategy to help overcome state problems and, thus, to maintain and improve the quality of life for Coloradans.

CHOICES, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Choices

Problems affecting adult learning services in Colorado have been discussed. These include problems of access, inadequacies in services, deficiencies in planning and coordination of services, and inequities in financing of services. A variety of rather specific policies which could be pursued to overcome problems have been described. Coloradans who have potential to affect public opinion regarding educational matters hold views that support these policies. The policies are aimed at:

(1) clarifying state responsibility for educational service to adults;

(2) providing incentives for various groups to act to solve problems;

(3) providing technical assistance to aid local groups and institutions to more effectively plan educational services;

(4) promoting public awareness of educational opportunities;

(5) stimulating creative action through competition for small grants for targeted and experimental programs;

(6) encouraging educational improvements through publicity for model educational programs;

(7) increasing state agency capacity to respond to present problems, anticipate future needs, and aid in coordination of educational services; and

(8) providing alternative financial mechanisms which are appropriate to adult learning services.

A great deal of ground has been covered, and the many decisions implied could dampen enthusiasm for the task of establishing policies to overcome problems. To make that task manageable, decisions can be framed in two broad categories. Since it is conceivable that all of the policy aims could be addressed over time, the first set of choices involves whether it is preferable to:

(1) develop a comprehensive, long-range plan that addresses many policy aims, or

(2) limit current attention to the aim(s) that seem most important or most feasible to accomplish in the immediate future.

The first approach would involve goal-setting and the establishment of general, long-range priorities. Aims could be sequenced on the basis of beliefs about what is needed early, in order to make it more likely that other aims are accomplished later (e.g., is increased state agency capability or some other aim a necessary first step?). Or, some policy aims could be given greater or lesser attention, dependent on needs and political and financial realities and opportunities over time.

The second approach would require current judgments of the importance and/or feasibility of accomplishing a particular aim. It would not require a long-range plan that outlines broader intents.

The next set of choices stems from policy goals and aims. Choices must be made among a variety of potential actions that could be taken to achieve goals and aims. Judgments must be made about which policy actions would be most effective, are most needed, and are most feasible. For example, assume that the aim is to provide incentives for various groups to act on problems. Are tax incentives for students or employers appropriate, or public recognition of creative problem-solving efforts, or changes in faculty systems for salary, promotion and tenure? Other means? Some combination of several? If improvements to increase access to education are intended, are general policies which promote public awareness of existing educational opportunities most needed, or are actions targeted at specific audiences (e.g., under-educated, unemployed) needed more?

If several aims are intended, are there some "general purpose" policies that would accomplish them simultaneously? For example, would changes in state funding formulae for schools and colleges allow for accomplishment of several aims and resolution of several problems? Would the establishment of a technical and planning

assistance service to aid educational institutions have broader impact and/or wider appeal than, say, establishment of a foundation to offer grants and loans to students? Could both be useful in meeting several aims?

A number of criteria relevant for evaluation of policy options are discussed in the full report. The most general of these are:

(1) Policies should reflect a recognition of present and potential problems and needs, the desire to preserve future options, and the reality of limited state resources.

(2) Policies should reflect a balancing of concern for excellence in educational offerings and equity of access to educational resources.

(3) Public funding should not supplant, but rather should complement and encourage private-sector investments in education.

(4) Policies should encourage accountability and cost-effectivness.

Colorado educators and lay leaders have provided insights which can be used in the decision process. Their broad policy preferences have been summarized here. Their additional advice can be found in the full report and in earlier publications of the Lifelong Learning Project.

Implications

Policies have been presented which would require action by state education agencies, educational governing bodies, or the State Legislature. Some policies would require action by, or would affect educational institutions, local communities, and such groups as business-industry. The need for policy discussions within and among these groups is evident. How might these discussions be initiated? What existing forums have related concerns? What new forums might be appropriate?

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education. As sponsor of the Lifelong Learning Project, the Commission has expressed its intent to consider policy options noted in the report. The convening authority of the Commission could be used to form a special task force to study policy options and to solicit comment by private and public educational institutions, other state agencies, the general public, and such interests as public broadcasting and business-industry.

The Commission has (or soon will form) several other task groups that have related concerns. Each four years, CCHE prepares a master planning document for Colorado postsecondary education. The plan identifies issues which will be addressed over the four-year period and outlines procedures that will be used to resolve issues. These procedures include formation of postsecondary or inter-agency task forces to study issues and make recommendations to the full Commission. The 1983 master plan identifies a number of groups that will be discussing topics related to problems and policy options noted in this report. The report should be made available to members of the task forces so that relevant adult learning service problems and policy options can be included in task force discussions.

The CCHE task forces, identified by issues that they are charged to address include:

(1) What should be the role of extended campus and outreach instructional programs? (Access Issue 2)

(2) What should the state's enrollment policy be? (Access Issue 3)

(3) What should be the contribution of higher education to the quality of secondary education? (Quality Issue 2)

(4) What should be the state role in developing the use of educational technology for the delivery of education in Colorado? (Quality Issue 5)

(5) What should be the balance between state support of institutions and state support of students? (Financing Issue 1)

(6) What proportion of the costs of postsecondary education should be borne by the taxpayer, by students, and by other sources? (Financing Issue 3)

(7) What contribution should postsecondary education make to fostering of economic development in the state? (Economic Development Issue 1)

(8) Should the governance of postsecondary education in Colorado be restructured? (Governance Issue 2)

Other groups. The State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) also use task groups to study educational problems. The SBCCOE, by nature of the many adult students represented in the community colleges and vocational schools it governs, should be especially interested in using the policy options report as a basis for discussion and action. CDE is concerned with educational improvements in elementary and secondary schools. Policies which promote informed involvement and support of parents and other community members, and the role of adult learning services to accomplish this end, should be considered in CDE and public school district forums. The Department also administers federal grants for adult basic and community education, and thus has an interest in several other policy options noted in the report.

Some policy options call for educational institutions to specify concern for adult audiences in their role and mission statements. Others call for faculty incentives so that faculty members are more likely to respond to adult and community learning needs. Governing boards, administrators, and faculty councils of school districts and postsecondary institutions will need to consider these options.

The newly formed Colorado High Technology Institute, comprised of several university and business-industry interests, will have interest in several options noted in the report. Policy options that relate to business-education collaboration are of particular relevance to the Institute.

Public policy problems and options presented in the report should be of concern to the Governor and the General Assembly. The Joint Education Committee of the General Assembly should have particular interest. Legislative groups and gubernatorial task forces that deal with economic development, employment, and technology should have interest as well.

Similarly, other state groups and associations have concerns related to matters discussed in the report. Some of these groups include: the Colorado Associations of Continuing and Adult Educators and of Community Educators; the Colorado chapters of the American Society for Training and Development and the Society for Performance and Instruction; the Associations of School District Administrators and of School Boards; County Commissioners; Local Councils of Government.

Concluding Comments

By nature of its emphasis on high technology, and its desire to be on the cutting edge of the post-industrial era, Colorado has interests vested in change, and a responsibility to provide creative leadership to manage change. Sound educational policies and programs are required if that leadership is to be nurtured, and if the public is to be able to adapt to change and be informed enough to provide leaders with needed guidance. The frontier spirit, so much a part of Colorado's history, is still evident. That spirit can provide the impetus and enthusiasm to shape a desireable future.

This report has described complex problems in the provision of educational services for adults, and policies to attack these problems. The problems are specific to Colorado, but are not unlike problems in many other states. Colorado has the opportunity to take action in its own behalf, and to serve as a model for other states as well. It can do this by developing creative, effective educational policies that serve the public interest.

There is evidence that Colorado and Coloradans accept these challenges and are prepared to act on them. The fact that the Commission on Higher Education sponsored the project that produced this report, even though it may not be in agreement with all that is included, is one such evidence. Similarly, a diverse group of state and local educational professionals, business-industry representatives, and lay leaders volunteered considerable time and effort to help shape this report. Their concern, and the fact that they agree on broad policy guidelines, suggest that other agreements are both possible and probable. These are ingredients basic to policy action.

PUBLICATIONS OF THE COLORADO LIFELONG LEARNING PROJECT

(Available at cost of printing, postage, and handling. Order form, reverse side.)

"Issues in Adult Learning and Education," S. Knop, Aug., 1982.

A paper prepared in conjunction with the 5 yr. master planning process for Colorado postsecondary education. Represents a summary of state policy and planning issues in adult and continuing education. Issues are grouped under 3 headings: the purposes of adults' learning and the provision of adult education opportunities; the nature of learning opportunities and education programs; access to education opportunities. Orientation to issues is provided. Questions which focus on broad philosophic and more targeted issues for postsecondary policy and planning are raised. Issues are data-based, stemming from surveys of Colorado educators and lay leaders, and national continuing education research studies.

"The Colorado Case: Experiences and Accomplishments of the Colorado Lifelong Learning Project," S. Knop, Sept., 1982.

Colorado was one of six pilot states in the Education Commission of the States'/W. K. Kellogg Foundation Lifelong Learning Project. The purpose of that project was to enhance state planning and policies in support of adult learning. The case study documents circumstances affecting state-level planning and policy in Colorado. The State's approach to adapting and pursuing ECS project goals is presented. Project activities from mid-May, 1980, through September, 1982, are summarized. Project survey instruments used to determine policy issues and alternatives are included, along with preliminary descriptive survey findings. On-going activities, sponsored by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education are discussed. Insights about processes for planning and policy formulation are highlighted.

"Colorado Population Changes: A Source Book for Education Planners and Policy Makers," S. Knop, March, 1983.

The "Source Book" summarizes changes in the Colorado population, 1970 to 1980, compares these changes with nation-wide trends, and notes regional exceptions to general trends within Colorado. It represents heavy reliance on early releases of group data from the 1980 Census of Population and Housing, and includes 35 tables describing characteristics of the U.S. and Colorado population. Characteristics of greatest interest to educators are reported and discussed (e.g., rural-urban distinctions, age, sex, race and ethnicity, family and household size, income, educational attainment, school enrollment, sector- industry- and occupation of employment, and in-migration). Total population numbers possessing various characteristics, proportions of the 1980 and 1970 population, and percent change 1970 to 1980, are reported. Colorado tables represent the population state-wide, in two different sets of geographic regions, and in the State's 63 counties. A user's guide is included, along with a sample demographic questionnaire which would allow educational survey data to be easily compared with Census tables. The "Source Book" is particularly relevant to those interested in characteristics of the Colorado population; however, those outside Colorado can benefit from a review of U.S. population trends, and may wish to replicate similar studies in their own states.

"Public Opinion Studies: Low-Cost Methods for Soliciting Perspectives of the Public and Special Interest Groups," S. Knop, T. Grieder, and E. Knop, April, 1983.

A paper presented in the Political Science section of the Western States' Social Science Association 25th Annual Meeting, Albuquerque, NM. Abstract: As alternative to political pressure groups, professionals in academic institutions, planning agencies and consulting firms are increasingly called upon by policy makers to provide objective advice on complicated matters of public policy. Insights for policy analysis and formulation can be gathered in a number of ways, among them polling of the public and special interest groups. Common points of skepticism about opinion studies are that: (1) most people are not knowledgeable or interested enough to respond to complex questions, sets of interrelated issues and accompanying trade-offs; (2) to overcome knowledge and interest deficits is too difficult and costly to be frequently undertaken; and (3) the process of polling may result in respondents developing unrealistic expectations. The experiences of a project studying adult education policy in Colorado suggest this skepticism to be unwarranted. Results of study procedures indicate that thoughtful judgments regarding complex matters can be solicited at low cost from members of the public and special interest groups, without heightening potential for conflict or risking unreasonable expectations. Methods which have yielded considerable data and unusually high response rates include two-staged mailed surveys and 'working' conferences. Noteworthy findings include a high degree of agreement about the nature and priority of the state's education problems--between education groups that often must compete for limited funds, and among educator and citizen respondents.

"A Profile of Colorado's Adult Learning Needs and Resources," S. Knop, Sept., 1983.

Summarizes Project findings regarding learning needs of Colorado adults, resources currently available to meet needs, and organizational factors which affect distribution of learning resources. The report is divided into three major sections. First, demographic and socio-economic trends and adult role responsibilities and life transitions which imply learning needs are described. Relationships between individual learning needs and collective learning needs are discussed. Profiles of adults who have a propensity to participate in learning activity are contrasted with profiles of people who are considerably under-represented in learning activities. Second, learning resources currently available to Colorado adults are examined. Private sector resources are commented on; publicly-sponsored resources are described in more detail. Organizational factors which affect adults' access to learning resources are noted. The final section is brief in its treatment of implications of this assessment of needs and resources. Implications are the subject of the Project publication, "Policy Options Affecting Adult Learning Services in Colorado."

"Policy Options Affecting Adult Learning Services in Colorado," S. Knop, Nov., 1983 (Full report and condensed version available).

In a time when educational issues are being raised for public discussion, the report, "Policy Options Affecting Adult Learning Services in Colorado" is intended as a springboard for policy action. The report is written for use by policy makers, educators, and concerned lay citizens as they seek to resolve difficult challenges facing Colorado education and larger society. The report: (1) summarizes issues and problems affecting adult learning services in Colorado; (2) presents policies and policy options that could be pursued to resolve issues and problems; (3) describes policy preferences of several hundred educators and lay civic organizations leaders in the state; and (4) discusses implications for state agencies, educational institutions, governing bodies, and other groups.

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